

Record of individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Decision made by	Cllr Bethia Thomas, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council
Key decision?	No
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	10/07/2024
Name and job title of officer requesting the decision	Tim Oruye Head of Policy and Programmes
Officer contact details	Tel: 07849701774 Email: tim.oruye@southandvale.gov.uk
Decision	<p>To approve a Productivity Plan for Vale of White Horse and agree for its submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) – now renamed the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.</p> <p>To allow the approved Productivity Plan to be published on the council's website.</p>
Reasons for decision	<p>As part of 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement, HM Government asked local authorities to develop and share productivity plans. The Minister for Local Government wrote to Chief Executives on 16 April 2024 providing further details and setting a deadline of 19 July 2024 for their submission.</p> <p>The productivity plans consist of four main sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources. 2) How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources? 3) Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems. 4) The barriers preventing progress that the government can help to reduce or remove. <p>The plans will be reviewed to identify common themes and issues across the sector. They will not, however, be rated or scored and DLUHC will not produce any kind of league table.</p>

Alternative options rejected	Failing to submit an approved Productivity Plan would impact upon the reputation of Vale of White Horse District Council. It would also mean that any contributions, insights and opinions that the council may have in relation to improving productivity in local government would not be considered.			
Legal implications	There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.			
Financial implications	There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.			
Climate implications	The Climate Action Plan delivers reductions in energy and resource use and contributes to the council's efficiency and productivity.			
Equalities implications	There are no equalities implications identified.			
Other implications	None			
Background papers considered	None			
Declarations/ conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/ officer consulted by the Cabinet member?	None			
List consultees		Name	Outcome	Date
	Legal legal@southandvale.gov.uk		No comment	09/07/2024
	Finance Finance@southandvale.gov.uk	Simon Hewings	Approved Comments incorporated into the report	03/07/2024
	Climate and biodiversity climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk	Heather Saunders	Approved, comments incorporated	02/07/2024
	Diversity and equality equalities@southandvale.gov.uk	Lorne Grove	Approved	04/07/2024
	Communications communications@southandvale.gov.uk	Mark Minion	Approved. Team will publish the plan on the council website.	03/07/2024

Confidential decision? If so, under which exempt category?	No
Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chair?	N/A
Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?	Yes
Cabinet portfolio holder's signature To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Signature: Bethia Thomas Date: 10/07/2024

ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 16 July 2024	Time: 2.37pm
Date published to all councillors	Date: 16 July 2024	
Call-in deadline	Date: N/A	Time: N/A

Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off, including the chief executive. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must hand-sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.
Tel. 01235 422520.
Email: democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
 - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
 - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
 - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income (except government grant) of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the chief executive or relevant head of service, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
 - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
 - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
 - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
 - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
 - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.